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KERALA FIRST STATE TO FIX FLOOR PRICE FOR VEGETABLES

Sixteen vegetables will have floor price that would be 20% above their production cost, with effect from November 1

NO PAIN FOR FARMERS EVEN IF MARKET CRASHES

Even if the market price went below this, the produce would be procured at the floor price from farmers, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Tuesday. The vegetables would be graded as per the quality and the floor price fixed accordingly, he said. "Farmers across the country are not satisfied... but for the last four-and-half years, we have supported them," he added

PRICE TO BE REVISED ON A REGULAR BASIS

- The 16 vegetables include potato, tomato, beans, tapioca, lady's finger, bitter gourd, carrot, beetroot, banana among others
- Farmers with a maximum of 15 acres of vegetable cultivation per season will be eligible for the scheme. The state government will revise the floor price on a regular basis, the chief minister said

15L tonnes
KERALA'S ANNUAL VEGETABLE PRODUCTION, ACCORDING TO STATE GOVT

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Sharp message to Beijing as India, US ink pacts

5 accords, including Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement, at 2+2 dialogue show US solidarity against Chinese aggression

PUSHKAR BANAKAR & MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

INDIA and the US on Tuesday signed five pacts, including the long-negotiated Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) on geospatial data during the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue at a time when New Delhi and Beijing are engaged in a stand-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

The BECA will give India access to accurate US satellite data, which will help in navigation and pinpoint accuracy for weapons. "We are happy that we've completed the BECA, which will open new avenues in the information sharing. We are eager to discuss further issues with US," Singh said after the meeting.

Experts say BECA will usher in a new era in ties, especially in defence cooperation. "India-US are looking at geo-spatial intelligence and greater cooperation in all fields. Further, a fair amount of congruence has been achieved in terms of the idea of an inclusive Indo-Pacific. The wider Indo-Pacific sweep includes freedom of navigation, use of global commons and the sea lanes of communication," Major General S B Asthana (retd) said.

Kriti Upadhyaya of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies said that signing of BECA in the backdrop of the India-China tensions definitely sends a message to China that the US stands by India in improving its defences against China.

Discussions in the meeting involving US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Secretary of Defence Mark Esper, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh focused on a plethora of regional and global issues, including coronavirus, trade, free and fair Indo-Pacific and enhancing bilateral ties.

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Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addresses the media after the India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar (R), US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (2L) and US Secretary of Defence Mark Esper (L) look on, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Tuesday | PTI

RAJNATH RAPS 'RECKLESS CHINA'

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's rebuke of Chine for its "reckless aggression on our northern borders", in his opening address at the dialogue, became one of the talking points. "Excellencies, in the area of defense we are challenged by reckless aggression on our northern borders," a State Department release quoted Singh as saying. P9

Child marriages on the rise, 2 stopped

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

WHILE the economic impact of the Covid-induced lockdown and its after-effect has been well documented by now, what has perhaps been ignored is the social implication. Cash-strapped families in rural areas are getting their underage girl children married, and between March and September this year, over 181 cases of child marriage have been registered in Karnataka. Officials say this may just be the tip of the iceberg and with schools remaining closed, there may be no way to keep track of the status of girl children.

In recent cases, two child marriages — one in a remote village in HD Kote taluk in Karnataka and another at Madanpalle in Andhra Pradesh — were stopped in a matter of just three days after The New Indian Express tipped off the police and the Department of Women and Child Development.

On October 25, this reporter was alerted by a member of an NGO about the marriage of a 17-year-old girl hailing from Sidlaghatta in Chikkaballapur district, scheduled to be held at Madanpalle in Andhra Pradesh the very next morning. The reporter tweeted, tagging the Hyderabad police around 5 pm, who, in turn, tagged the Andhra police handle. The latter then tagged the Chittoor police handle. Calls were also made to three police stations in Madanpalle as there was very little time.

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NOW, ANYONE CAN BUY LAND IN J&K

SANA SHAKIL AND FAYAZ WANI @ New Delhi/Srinagar

IN a move that can have long-term political and economic implications for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Centre on Tuesday notified several laws, including major amendments to the Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Act to allow any Indian citizen to buy land in the Union Territory.

Agricultural land will be an exception to the law as it can only be transferred or sold to an agriculturist in J&K. However, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs can authorise an agriculturist to 'alienate' the land to a non-agriculturist for sale, gift or exchange.

The new amendment implies domiciles of J&K will now effectively get protection only in government jobs.

The Union Government had earlier hinted that some protection on land rights on the lines of Himachal Pradesh will be granted to domiciles of J&K.

Before the reading down of Article 370 and Article 35-A last year, non-residents could not buy any immovable property in Jammu and Kashmir. But the new order, titled the 'Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of Central Laws) Third Order, 2020', changed this status.

The order issued by the Union Home Ministry evoked sharp reactions from J&K political parties, ranging from 'unacceptable' to 'betrayal'.

Several regional parties, under the umbrella of People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration, vowed to fight "on all fronts" against it. P9

Under-fire FB exec Ankhi Das calls it quits

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

CONTROVERSIAL India policy head of Facebook, Ankhi Das, who had opposed blocking of right-wing hate content on its platform, put in her papers on Tuesday.

She was outed by US media reports that criticised Facebook for its skew in regulating hate content.

The resignation to pursue her interest in 'public service' also came close on the heels of her grilling by a parliamentary committee on data protection. She had joined Facebook in 2011.

"Ankhi has decided to step down from her role in Facebook to pursue her interest in public service," said Ajit Mohan, vice president and managing director, India, in a statement. P13

EXPRESS READ

HC to monitor probe in Hathras case, says SC

New Delhi: The CBI probe in the Hathras case is to be monitored by the Allahabad High Court and the CRPF will provide security to the victim's family, the SC has said. P10

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